

**BEFORE THE WASHINGTON
UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION**

WASHINGTON UTILITIES AND
TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION,

Complainant,

v.

CASCADE NATURAL GAS
CORPORATION,

Respondent.

DOCKET UG-170929

ORDER 01

COMPLAINT AND ORDER
SUSPENDING TARIFF REVISIONS

BACKGROUND

- 1 On August 31, 2017, Cascade Natural Gas Corporation (Cascade or Company) filed with the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission (Commission) revisions to its currently effective Tariff WN U-3 as listed in the appendix attached to this Order. The purpose of this filing is to increase rates and charges for natural gas service provided to customers in the state of Washington. Specifically, Cascade requests authority to increase charges and rates for natural gas service by approximately \$5.9 million, or 2.71 percent in base rates, effective October 1, 2017. The Company agrees to waive presentation of the filing at an open meeting and to suspension of the tariffs pending Commission investigation.

DISCUSSION

- 2 Cascade's requested increase might injuriously affect the rights and interests of the public, and Cascade has not demonstrated that the increase would result in rates that are fair, just, reasonable, and sufficient. The Commission, therefore, suspends the tariff filing and will hold public hearings, if necessary, to determine whether the proposed increases are fair, just, reasonable, and sufficient.

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

- 3 (1) The Commission is an agency of the State of Washington vested by statute with the authority to regulate rates, regulations, and practices of public service companies, including natural gas companies.
- 4 (2) Cascade is a natural gas company and a public service company subject to Commission jurisdiction.
- 5 (3) The tariff revisions Cascade filed on August 31, 2017, would increase charges and rates for service provided by Cascade and might injuriously affect the rights and interest of the public.
- 6 (4) Cascade has not yet demonstrated that the tariff revisions would result in rates that are fair, just, reasonable, and sufficient.
- 7 (5) Cascade's rates and charges for natural gas service shown on any tariffs that Cascade does not propose to revise may also be investigated to determine if they are fair, just, reasonable, and sufficient.
- 8 (6) In order to carry out the duties imposed upon the Commission by law, and as authorized in RCW 80.04.130, the Commission believes it is necessary to investigate Cascade's books, accounts, practices and activities; to make a valuation or appraisal of Cascade's property; and to investigate and appraise various phases of Cascade's operations. The Commission finds that this docket meets the criteria of WAC 480-07-400(2)(b)(i) and that the parties may conduct discovery pursuant to the Commission's discovery rules in WAC 480-07-400 – 425.
- 9 (7) As required by RCW 80.04.130(4), Cascade bears the burden to prove that the proposed increases are fair, just, reasonable, and sufficient.
- 10 (8) Cascade may be required to pay the expenses reasonably attributable and allocable to such an investigation, consistent with RCW 80.20.

ORDER

THE COMMISSION ORDERS:

- 11 (1) The tariff revisions Cascade Natural Gas Corporation filed on August 31, 2017,
are suspended.
- 12 (2) The Commission will hold hearings at such times and places as may be required.
Such hearings may also examine Cascade Natural Gas Corporation's rates and
charges for natural gas service shown on any tariffs that Cascade Natural Gas
Corporation does not propose to revise.
- 13 (3) Cascade Natural Gas Corporation must not change or alter the tariffs filed in this
docket during the suspension period unless authorized by the Commission.
- 14 (4) The Commission will institute an investigation of Cascade Natural Gas
Corporation's books, accounts, practices, activities, property, and operations as
described above.
- 15 (5) The parties may conduct discovery pursuant to the Commission's discovery rules
in WAC 480-07-400 – 425.
- 16 (6) Cascade Natural Gas Corporation shall pay the expenses reasonably attributable
and allocable to the Commission's investigation to the extent required in RCW
80.20.

DATED at Olympia, Washington, and effective September 14, 2017.

WASHINGTON UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

DAVID W. DANNER, Chairman

ANN E. RENDAHL, Commissioner

JAY M. BALASBAS, Commissioner

Appendix

TARIFF WN U-3

36 th Revision Sheet No. 2	Canceling	35 th Revision Sheet No. 2
3 rd Revision Sheet No. 25	Canceling	2 nd Revision Sheet No. 25
3 rd Revision Sheet No. 200	Canceling	2 nd Revision Sheet No. 200
2 nd Revision Sheet No. 200-A	Canceling	1 st Revision Sheet No. 200-A
55 th Revision Sheet No. 502	Canceling	54 th Revision Sheet No. 502
60 th Revision Sheet No. 503	Canceling	59 th Revision Sheet No. 503
44 th Revision Sheet No. 504	Canceling	43 rd Revision Sheet No. 504
43 rd Revision Sheet No. 505	Canceling	42 nd Revision Sheet No. 505
60 th Revision Sheet No. 511	Canceling	59 th Revision Sheet No. 511
54 th Revision Sheet No. 570	Canceling	53 rd Revision Sheet No. 570
18 th Revision Sheet No. 663	Canceling	17 th Revision Sheet No. 663
39 th Revision Sheet No. 512	Withdrawn	
50 th Revision Sheet No. 577	Withdrawn	
2 nd Revision Sheet No. 577-A	Withdrawn	